



TO BAN HUMAN CLONING

"As we seek to improve human life, we must always preserve human dignity. And therefore, we must prevent human cloning by stopping it before it starts."

—President George W. Bush, April 10, 2002

The U.S. Position

The United States supports efforts to ban all forms of human cloning. Human cloning, for any purpose whatsoever, is unethical and morally reprehensible, and ignores respect for human dignity. At the 59th UN General Assembly, the United States will join a large group of nations co-sponsoring a resolution, proposed by Costa Rica, to draft an international convention against all human cloning.

What is Human Cloning?

The process commonly referred to as cloning (Somatic Cell Nuclear Transfer) results in the creation of a human embryo. In "reproductive" cloning, this embryo is implanted into a woman's womb and allowed to grow. In what has been called "therapeutic," "research," and "experimental" cloning, the stem-cells are removed from the embryo, destroying this nascent human life.

A ban that differentiates between human reproductive and experimental cloning would essentially authorize the creation of a human embryo for the purpose of killing it, thus elevating the value of research and experimentation above that of a human life. Experimental embryonic cloning would therefore turn nascent human life into a natural resource to be mined and exploited, eroding the sense of worth and dignity of the individual. A partial ban that prohibits reproductive cloning but permits therapeutic, research, or experimental cloning is unacceptable to the United States and many other countries.

Stem-Cell Therapy

The United States supports continued research into the promising field of stem-cell therapy. In the United States,

both human embryonic stem-cell research and so-called "adult" stem-cell research are legal and both receive funding from the federal government. There are important ethical restrictions, however, placed on the use of federal funds to conduct human embryonic stem-cell research to ensure that the funds do not encourage or support the further destruction of human embryos. Specifically, federally funded researchers may use only stem-cells derived prior to

the announcement of the policy; federally funded researchers may not use newly destroyed embryos to derive new stem-cell lines.

The federal government also provides substantial support to adult stem-cell research, which does not require the destruction of human embryos. Within

the last few years, a wealth of published scientific reports has demonstrated that adult stem-cells—contained in tissues of the human body, and after birth in the umbilical cord and placenta—have the ability to transform into other tissue and cell types, and have been shown to be able to repair and regenerate damaged and diseased tissue. Adult stem-cells have already benefited hundreds of patients in clinical trials, for such conditions as heart damage, Parkinson's disease, spinal cord injury, multiple sclerosis, and sickle-cell anemia. The potential for adult stem-cells to advance medicine and alleviate human suffering is enormous.

The Support of All Nations Is Needed

Consenting to human cloning would be a step toward a society in which human beings are grown for spare body parts and children are engineered to fit eugenic specification. We cannot allow human life to be devalued in this way. We urge all nations to prohibit any research, experimentation, development, or application that is aimed at human cloning.



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